

Suicide of Dr. Shimer

Henry Shimer came to Mt. Carroll from the East, New York, or Pennsylvania, we think. He was a stone mason and helped build the foundation of the court house in 1855 and 1863, the building being finished in 1859, being four years in building we are told. We have been told that he also helped to lay the brick in the building.

Married In 1857

In 1857, the Carroll County History says he married Frances A. Wood, who with Miss Adelia Gregory was conducting a school, which afterward became the Mt. Carroll Seminary, and is now the Frances Shimer School for Girls.

Bright, Well Read Young Man

Henry Shimer was a bright, well read young man, about the ordinary in intelligence and a thinker. He concluded to study medicine, did so, was graduated and took place among the best and most prominent of the medical men of his day in this part of the state. He was a character, common place and was "wed to his profession." He was a botanist, and a great lover of the outdoors, loving flowers and birds and plants and bugs, and became acquainted with all species. He wrote hundreds of columns for the Daily Democrat on various topics in the '90's.

Wrote On Appendicitis

He wrote a series of articles on appendicitis, when operations for the disease were rare. He explained that it had been called "inflammation of the bowels, and how one of our young men, Lee Beardsley had an attack of it and he discovered it was the appendix and not the bowels themselves that were inflamed, and he had cured him without an operation, after he thought he was past curing. He believed in operating, however, and predicted that the day would come when surgeons would operate for this disease without losing many patients, although he held that at that time only one out of a hundred operated upon recovered; that he was taking one chance in a hundred when he submitted to such an operation. The doctor's prediction has been verified, and thousands of operations are being performed and few die under the knife or from the effects of the operation.

Was a Bad Writer

The doctor wrote a very bad hand, and used Latin names for plants and bugs, consequently many mistakes were made in his articles, and it rather peeved him although he said he could not blame the boys for not reading his writing. We were then conducting a morning paper and many many nights he sat in a chair in the office sleeping, until proofs of his articles were taken and he could read them himself. We used to rewrite his articles, which took much time, but we could read his writing pretty well and it expedited the type-setting.

(To Be Continued)

In the days of AULD LANG SYNE

Remembrances of the "Old Days", when the writer was a boy
as they come back to us now

EDITOR'S NOTE — IN CASE YOU FIND ANYTHING OVERDRAWN OR UNDERDRAWN, MISSTATED, FORGOTTEN, OR OMITTED, YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO "TAKE YOUR PEN IN HAND" AND CORRECT, CONTRADICT, OR AMEND BY "DASHING OFF" A COLUMN OR TWO, OR THREE OR MORE. THE MORE THE MERRIER; AND IT WILL NOT "HURT OUR FEELINGS".]

INSTALLMENT NINETY-SEVEN

Dr. Shimer's Continued from Monday

A Tramp Set The Letter

WE remember upon one occasion a tramp printer came along and we "put him on" that night. We showed him Doctor Shimer's copy and asked him if he could read it. He said he could, that he had traveled the world over and had read all kinds of manuscripts, so we gave it to him. That night when the doctor got his proof, he looked it over, wrinkled his brow, looked at us and said: "Cal, I never wrote this!" The tramp had set it as it look to him, and the proof was too bad to be corrected, so we laid it over until the next day, re-wrote it and it appeared all right. The doctor often spoke of that "dumb tramp." But on the whole "he wasn't so dumb," and we think enjoyed a kick out of it, for he took a proof of the article with him. Dr. Shimer often had a hard job making out a word that we would get stuck on, himself, and had he not known what should be there never would have known from the chicken tracks on the paper.

Used To Tell This Story

There were boys taken at the Seminary in its early day, and some of them worked their way through for there was lots of work to be done. The buildings were all heated by wood stoves and it took much wood during the winter, hundreds of cords, and that had to be carried up the stairs to the many rooms. Dr. Shimer lived at the Seminary, had a room or office there by himself; for it was always said that his married life was not a happy one and that he and Mrs. Shimer did not live together as man and wife. The doctor was rather uncouth and cared nothing for dress, and looked like a workman around the buildings. A new boy came, and several of the other boys told him: "There is an old fellow here with black whiskers who is to help you carry up the wood, but he will slip off down town if you do not watch him and you will have to do the work yourself." The young fellow saw the doctor come out of the building and prepare to go down town, when he went to him and said: "Hold on there old fellow, you don't slip away from me, you help me carry up the wood." Of course he didn't and explained who he was and that settled it. But he liked to tell the story.

Drove A Sleepy Old Horse

He drove an old plug of a horse attached to a gig, which might have been the one hoss shay, for it was dilapidated enough to represent it. It is said that the doctor and the horse used to both go to sleep along the road while calling on patients and it is not recorded that the horse ever went at a faster gait than a walk. It is said that his rooms at the Seminary were a regular museum, containing skeletons, stuffed animals and birds, bugs, old newspapers and manuscripts and trash of all kinds.

Shot And Hung Himself

On a Sunday morning the news was flashed around town that "Dr. Shimer has committed suicide," and the report proved to be only too true. He had a first tried to shoot himself, but did not make a good job of it, so he took the lines from his harness, made a noose and fixed it to a rafter in the barn, then got on to a box, adjusted the noose, kicked the box from under him and strangled to death. Why he did it was never made public, but that he did not value life highly, he had often said. If he left any note telling why he had destroyed himself it was never made public. The doctor was quite wealthy, owning land in the Dakotas, Iowa, and at one time owned the most of the land in East Carroll, having acquired it by purchasing it at delinquent tax sales. He made what he did by frugality, and good investments.

He Was A Character

Dr. Shimer was a character, a success in his chosen profession, and in finance, but he evidently believed that his life was a failure, hence his taking off. He was a good friend of ours, we always liked him, and he told us many things about his early life and about things in general. It was while he was living that we found we were becoming hard of hearing and

we told him so. He pulled out his watch and held it away from our ear, asking us to tell him when we could hear it tick. We did so and he said in that drawl of his, "You can hear it further away than I can. Put a little olive oil in it."